

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-10 (Canceled).

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): An information processing apparatus for controlling an application object moving autonomously in a shared virtual space in which avatars representing users of other information processing apparatuses are active, said information processing apparatus comprising:

an examining module configured to examine at least either distribution or attributes of said active avatars in said shared virtual space;

a coordinate controller configured to control coordinates of said application object in accordance with results of the examination by said examining module;

a display controller configured to control display of information by said application object;

counting means for counting the number of avatars positioned within a predetermined range around said application object, said counting means weights said number of the avatars in keeping with the attributes thereof; and,

a charging module configured to process charges for the information controlled in terms of display by said display controller in accordance with results of the counting by said counting means.

Claims 12-13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A program storage medium which stores a computer-readable program for use by an information processing apparatus for controlling an

application object moving autonomously in a shared virtual space in which avatars representing users of other information processing apparatuses are active, the program comprising the steps of:

- examining at least either distribution or attributes of said active avatars in said shared virtual space;

- controlling coordinates of said application object in accordance with results of the examination;

- controlling display of information by said application object;

- counting the number of avatars positioned within a predetermined range around said application object;

- weighting said number of the avatars in keeping with the attributes thereof; and,

- processing charges for the information controlled in terms of display ~~by said display~~ ~~controlling means~~ in accordance with results of the counting.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An information processing method for use with an information processing apparatus for controlling an application object moving autonomously in a shared virtual space in which avatars representing users of other information processing apparatuses are active, said information processing method comprising the steps of:

- examining at least either distribution or attributes of said active avatars in said shared virtual space;

- controlling coordinates of said application object in accordance with results of the examination;

- controlling display of information by said application object;

- counting the number of avatars positioned within a predetermined range around said application object;

weighting said number of the avatars in keeping with the attributes thereof; and,  
processing charges for the information controlled in terms of display ~~by said display~~  
~~controlling means~~ in accordance with results of the counting.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): An information processing apparatus for controlling  
an application object moving autonomously in a shared virtual space in which avatars  
representing users of other information processing apparatuses are active, said information  
processing apparatus comprising:

an examining module configured to examine at least either distribution or attributes of  
said active avatars in said shared virtual space;

a coordinate controlling module configured to control coordinates of said application  
object in accordance with results of the examination;

a display controller configured to control display of information by said application  
object;

a counting module configured to count the number of avatars positioned within a  
predetermined range around said application object, said counting module weighting said  
number of the avatars in keeping with the attributes thereof; and,

a charging module configured to process charges for the information controlled in  
terms of display by said display controller in accordance with results of the counting by said  
counting module.